Utilizing Self-Reflection and Student Facilitated Discussions to Create Inclusive Communities

Melissa A. Reeves, Ph.D., NCSP, LPC
Immediate Past President - National Association of School Psychologists
Associate Professor - Winthrop University
mereev@aol.com or reevesm@winthrop.edu

VA-DJJ
September 20,2017

1

With contributions from Leticia Villarreal Sosa, Ph.D., LCSW

Understanding Race & Privilege

❑ Acknowledge and understand how our own experiences and upbringing influence how we view world

❑ Differences in identity and struggles related to place and power are woven throughout social and political history and culture

❑ Diversity has been country's strength but path to equality and mutual respect has been rocky

NASP (2016) – Understanding Race and Privilege

My Own Privilege

- In school I was perceived as smart
- Almost all my peers were just like me (very little racial, ethnic, and income diversity)
- Rarely picked on by others because I had an assertive personality and I stood up for others
- Lived in a safe neighborhood - played outside after dark as safety never a concern.
- When pulled over for a speeding ticket I was not fearful of my life or afraid I would be accused of something I didn't do.
- Despite family's financial setbacks, I never perceived college as unattainable
- We always had food on the table.
- I can walk into a mall or board a plane without someone assuming that I am a threat or will do something illegal.
- My heterosexual marriage is culturally acceptable
- I can afford additional academic supports for my children

3

Role of Privilege

- Many have never been asked or required to reflect on own privileged status
- Uncomfortable, discordant with common narrative
- Have seen it as suppressing but not always acknowledging the benefits
- Comes in many forms and also assigned within groups
- Problematic when:
  - it skews our personal interactions and judgments
  - contributes to or blinds us to systematic barriers for those who do not possess a certain privilege…thus perpetuating inequity
- Concept of "unearned advantages"

"Privilege is not visible to its holder; it is merely there, a part of the world, a way of life, simply the way thing are." (Wideman & Davis, 1995)

4

NASP (2016) – Understanding Race and Privilege

Bias

- ❑ Overt Bias
- ❑ Explicit Bias
  - ❑ Conscious
  - ❑ Deliberative
  - ❑ Social and personal values
  - ❑ Self-Report
- ❑ Implicit Bias
  - ❑ Unconscious
  - ❑ Spontaneous/automatic
  - ❑ Habit from direct & vicarious experience

Contributors to Bias in Justice Programs

- ❑ Uneven or biased implementation of disciplinary policies
- ❑ Discriminatory discipline practices
- ❑ Racial climate
- ❑ Under-resourced programs
- ❑ Inadequate education and training for teachers and officers
  - ❑ inadequate self-reflective strategies to identify and correct potential biases in perceptions and practice
- ❑ Others….?

Gregory, et al (2010)

EQUALITY   EQUITY

THE DIFFERENCE MATTERS.

EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY

In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.

In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.

In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.

8

Addressing these issues requires political will and teachers and administrators willing to take risks (Weisman and Hansen, 2008).

Individual Level

Self Reflection

- What are my cultural identities?
- How do my cultural identities shape my worldview?
- How does my own background help or hinder my connection to youth/communities?
- What are my initial reactions to youth who are culturally different than me?
- How much do I value input from my clients?
- How do I make space in my work for clients to name their own identities?
- What do I learn about myself when I listen to others who are different than me?

Address Power Imbalances

- What social and economic barriers that impact youth?
- What specific experiences are the youth having that are related to oppression or systemic issues?
- How does my work actively counter and challenge power imbalances?
- How do I extend my responsibility beyond the individual youth and advocate for change at a larger level? (Institutional, local, state, national?)

Institutional Level

Self Reflection

- How do we organizationally define culture and diversity?
- Does our organizational culture encourage respectful, substantive discussions about difference, oppression, and inclusion - a culture of collaboration?
- How does our hiring process reflect a commitment to diverse staff and leadership?
- Do we monitor hiring practices to ensure active recruitment, hiring, and retention of diverse staff?
- Does our staff reflect the communities we serve?
- Is our leadership reflective of the populations/communities we serve?

Power Imbalances

- How do we actively address inequalities internally (policies and procedures) and externally (legislative advocacy)?
- How do we define and live out the value of social justice?
- What are the organizational structures we have that encourage action to address inequalities?
- What training and professional development opportunities do we offer that address inequalities and encourage active self-reflection, and address power and privilege?
- How do we engage with the larger community to ensure their voices are heard in our work?

11

Best Practices

Culture of Dialogue:
- Opportunities for open and honest discussion regarding:
  - Race
  - Equity
  - Sexual Orientation and Gender
- Needs of the community/agency/individuals
- In a multilingual environment

Culture of Collaboration:
- Equity is important to all of us:
  - Parents – Family liaisons
  - Teachers
  - Counselors
  - Officers
  - Staff
  - Administration
- Community

Culture of Change:
- Providing the resources to change culture
- Professional development
- Creating positions that address needs (job skills, mental heath, mentoring…)
- Empowerment of students
- Diverse curriculum development

Culture of Equity:
- Success for all:
  - Celebrations of diverse cultures
  - Access to quality academic and skills training
  - Academic achievement
  - Culturally diverse staff

Culturally Competent Leaders/Mentors

- ❑ *Use authority to lead and guide, not control*
- ❑ Assess one's own culture
- ❑ Value diversity
- ❑ Manage dynamics of difference
- ❑ Adapt to diversity
- ❑ Institutionalize cultural knowledge
- ❑ Value professional development - expand multicultural understanding, knowledge of nondiscriminatory practice

NASP (2016) – Understanding Race and Privilege

Safe, Supportive, Positive Climates

❑ *Must focus on building relationships!!!!*
❑ Empower
❑ Reinforce a positive climate
❑ Model and teach desired behaviors
❑ Reassure will do all you can to protect
❑ Give them hope that all will be okay
❑ Help manage strong emotions
❑ Reinforce acceptance and appreciation for diversity as critical values
❑ Help them navigate difficult systems/environments

NASP (2016) – Guidance for Reinforcing Safe, Supportive, and Positive School Environments

Talking to Others About Privilege

1. Start by discussing how privilege looks in our society and which groups have privilege and which do not.
2. Stress that privilege is relative to each individual's lived experience.
3. Recognize that having privilege does not require feeling guilty for your privilege.
4. Determine and offer ways to challenge systems of privilege and oppression in your own life.

Lesson Plan for MS and HS: http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/diversity/social-justice

NASP (2016) – Understanding Race and Privilege

NASP Resource: (2016). *Talking About Race and Privilege: Lesson Plan for Middle and High School Students* [handout]

http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/diversity/social-justice

- Lesson Plan Objectives:
  - Define concept of privilege
  - Helps students to identify and express own examples of privilege
  - Provides notes for facilitator/teacher to guide discussions
- Content
  - What is privilege?
  - History and concept of privilege
  - Examples – advantages and disadvantages
  - Understanding how privilege impacts opportunities to learn
- Activities
  - Large group discussion and reflection questions
  - Privilege Aptitude Test – followed by group discussion

NASP Resource: (2016). *Talking About Race and Privilege: Lesson Plan for Middle and High School Students* [handout]

http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/diversity/social-justice

- ❑ Privilege based on two concepts
    1. Privilege includes unearned advantages that are highly valued but restricted to certain groups.
    2. When control or power has been given to one group (Group A), this group may earn privileges that have not been afforded to other groups (Group B and Group C).
- ❑ Discuss:
    - ▪ Advantages
    - ▪ Disadvantages
    - ▪ How privilege impacts learning

NASP Resource: (2016). *Talking About Race and Privilege: Lesson Plan for Middle and High School Students* [handout]

❑ **Large Group Reflection Questions**

1. Should the United States be a color blind nation? Is it important to discuss concepts of privilege and prejudice?

2. In the United States, there is a popular phrase "People need to pick themselves up by their bootstraps." How does the concept of privilege relate to this statement?

   Note: If you are working with a group of students who have not heard this phrase, replace it with the following: "Many Americans believe that people can be successful if they work hard and have a strong work ethic. How does the concept of privilege relate to this statement?"

3. Some people think, "I have not discriminated against anyone before" or "Slavery and Jim Crow segregation happened a long time go." Why should we have a conversation about how privilege affects us?

Privilege Aptitude Test

Item Number	Item	Yes	No	Points (0 or 1)
1	When I go to the store, people believe that I am trustworthy and I will not steal something. People in the store do not follow me around.			
2	As a boy I can play with dolls or as a girl I can play with trucks without anyone questioning my choice.			
3	I can walk after dark in public places without fear. I am not taught to fear walking alone after dark in most public spaces.			
4	When I am taught about American history or about contributions made, I am sure that I will see and hear stories about people who look like me.			
5	The majority of the staff at my school look like me.			
6	My school has plenty of books in the library, computers for students, and additional resources for students and teachers.			
7	I will not be teased because of my last name.			
8	I am encouraged to excel in every subject in school.			
9	When a question about my race is asked, I am not the only one singled out to answer or speak my opinion.			
10	When I watch television, there are a lot of people in positive roles that look like me.			
11	My intelligence is not questioned because of the way I speak.			
12	Using public bathrooms and going up and down the stairs in public spaces are easy for me.			
Total Points				

NASP Resource: (2016). *Talking About Race and Privilege: Lesson Plan for Middle and High School Students* [handout]

Large Group Activity: Reflection

1. Are there areas in which you are privileged? Are there areas in which you are not experiencing privilege?

2. What does "White privilege" mean to you? "Based on your experiences, finish this statement: Being White lets you _____."

3. Restate some of the examples the students provided. "Can these things only be achieved because of being White? What can privileged persons do so that non-majority individuals can also achieve these things?"

4. "We have a lot to learn about each other's (choose one: race, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability status, or SES). Share at least one positive thing or misconception about what your (choose one: race, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability status, or SES) means to you and that you want others to know."

NASP Resource: (2016). *Talking About Race and Privilege: Lesson Plan for Middle and High School Students* [handout]

☐ **Exit Card**

1. List one thing that you learned today about privilege.

2. What are two things that you found out makes you privileged?

3. Starting today, how can you raise awareness about privilege with your friends and/or family?

4. How did the lesson impact you? What emotions did you experience/feel?

NASP Resource: (2016). *Social Justice: Understanding Race and Privilege* [handout]

http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/diversity/social-justice

❑ Content:
- Background information
- Role of privilege
- Effects of privilege in schools
- Self-reflection questions
- Suggestions for talking to others about privilege

NASP Resource – *Understanding Race and Privilege*
Self-Reflection Questions

1. When was the last time you had to think about your ethnicity, race, gender identity, ability level, religion, and/or sexual orientation? What provoked you to think about it or acknowledge it?
2. When using social media, how diverse is your feed? How diverse are friends and followers?
3. How do you respond when others make negative statements towards individuals of a different ethnicity, race, gender, ability level, religion, sexual orientation and/or gender identity than yourself?
4. How often do you go into social settings where the majority of individuals are of a different ethnicity, race, gender, ability level, religion, sexual orientation and/or gender identity than yourself?
5. If you recognized your privilege, what did you do with this realization?

NASP (2016) – Understanding Race and Privilege

Additional NASP Social Justice Resources

http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and
publications/resources/diversity/social-justice

- *Social Justice Resource List* [Excel spreadsheet overviewing various resources]
- *Implicit Bias: A Foundation for School Psychologists* [2017, handout]
- *Guidance for Reinforcing Safe, Supportive and Positive School Environments for All Students* [2016, post-election statement].
- *Supporting Vulnerable Students in Stressful Times: Tips for Parents* [2016, handout].
- *Supporting Marginalized Students in Stressful Times: Tips for Educators* [2016, handout].
- *Racial and Ethnic Disproportionality in Education* [2013, Position Statement].
- *School Psychology Forum Special Issue: Encouraging Racial and Social Justice*
  - http://www.nasponline.org/publications/periodicals/spf/volume-10/volume-10-issue-3-(fall-2016)

NASP Resources to Support Refugee Youth and Families

http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/diversity/social-justice

- *Supporting Refugee Children & Youth: Tips for Educators*
- *Understanding the Plight of Immigrant and Refugee Students*
- *Engaging Refugee Families as Partners in Their Children's Education*
- *Promoting the Educational Success of Refugee Newcomer Students and Families*

http://apps.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/podcasts/podcast.aspx?id=248.

- Podcast: Naser, S. C., A'Vant, E. R., Hess, R. S., Scherr, T., Bass, S. A., & Persaud, S. (2017, February). *Best practices for supporting refugee students and their families.*

Support parents in supporting their children

- Non-majority children are growing up in the context of hate and parents are tasked with helping them overcome the challenges of discrimination.
- The effect of this hate rhetoric on mental health and health is well established.
- School based interventions that focus on child-child discrimination and teacher – child discrimination.
- School social workers and school psychologists can help build relationships between teachers and parents and address structural discrimination.
- Support parents in educating children about the value of diversity, increasing their ethnic pride, how to cope with discrimination, and model advocacy.
- Case of Pablo: "There's nothing harder than feeling unwanted. I felt unwanted."

Trauma Sensitive Responses & Supports: Students

- Behavior seen as potential outcome of life circumstances, not willful disobedience
- Help staff understand impact of stress and anxiety on behavior
- Build trusting relationships
- Provide multi-tiered supports
- Help develop ability to self-regulate
- Support student success, both academically and nonacademically
- Ensure they know how to access resources and supports

NASP (2016) – Supporting Marginalized Students..

Trauma Sensitive Responses & Supports:
Bystander Training & Culture

- Culture needs to empower bystanders to do the right thing ("caring majority") and positively reinforce when they do
- Make bystanders aware their own behavior can encourage or discourage bullying
- Teach skills to intervene when bullying is witnessed
- Hold bystanders accountable for their behavior in bullying situations
- Structure activities that encourage bystanders to develop positive relationships with potential victims
- Adults need to take action when bystanders report

Lesson Plan - http://www.interventioncentral.org/behavioral-interventions/bully-prevention/bystanders-turning-onlookers-bully-prevention-agents

Trauma Sensitive Responses & Supports:
Tips for Parents

- Understand effects of stressors and trauma on own life functioning
- Promote a sense of physical and psychological safety
- Be aware that adult reactions influence children's reactions
- Reinforce and focus on child's strengths and promote sense of belonging
- Monitor your children and seek help if needed
- Reach out to school and community resources

Small Steps Change Lives

- Little things, daily, can add up to big changes over time
- What you do on a day-to-day basis helps youth to make growth over time
- Don't get overwhelmed by the big issues and barriers; start small and build towards larger goals
- Find others willing to support change and together you can accomplish great things
- Ignore the negative and focus on the positive…everyone has strengths
- We may not always see the outcomes of our work but you are making a difference!
- REMEMBER…you as an individual can do great things!

Additional Resources

The International Rescue Committee

- http://www.rescue.org/where/united_states

Congreso de Latinos Unidos, Inc.

- http://www.congreso.net/about/agency-profile/

PFLAG

- https://www.pflag.org

Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network (GLSEN)

- http://www.glsen.org
- For Educators
  - Educator Guides
  - Safe Space Kit
  - LGBT-Inclusive Curriculum
  - Ready, Set, Respect
  - No Name-Calling Week

A series of TED Talks on race in America

- https://www.ted.com/playlists/250/talks_to_help_you_understand_r

A series of TED Talks on social justice, including one on Islamophobia

- https://www.ted.com/playlists/445/talks_to_help_you_understand_s
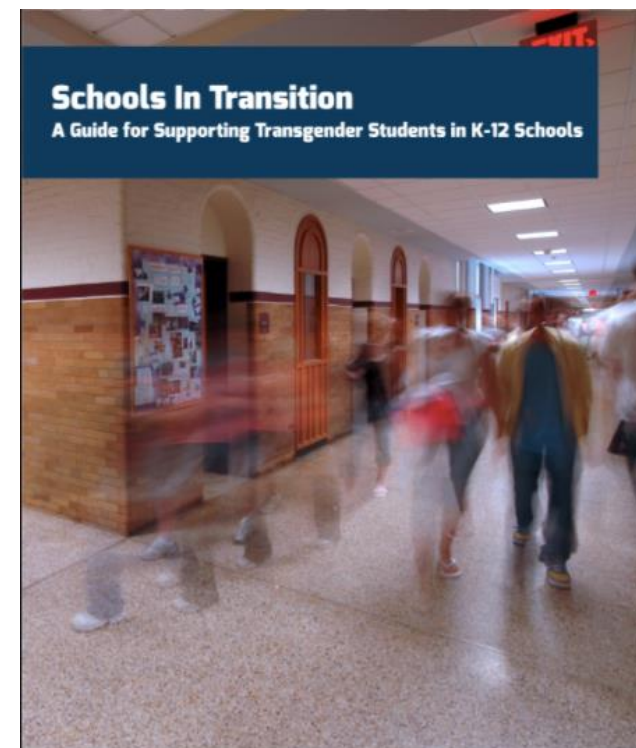
Schools In Transition

First-of-its-kind Publication providing guidance to schools to ensure safe and supportive environments for transgender students.

Published By: Gender Spectrum (2015)

 Appendix D – gender transition and support plan

https://www.genderspectrum.org/staging/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Schools-in-Transition-2015.pdf

Additional Resources

- Naser, S. C., A'Vant, E. R., Hess, R. S., Scherr, T., Bass, S. A., & Persaud, S. (2017, February). *Best practices for supporting refugee students and their families*. Documented Session conducted at the annual convention of the National Association of School Psychologists, San Antonio, TX.

- National Association of School Psychologists. (2016a). *NASP statement regarding recent acts of violence*. [Press release]. Retrieved from http://www.nasponline.org/about-school-psychology/media-room/press-releases/nasp-statement-regarding-recent-acts-of-violence

- Strauss, V. (2014, August 21). For the first time, minority students expected to be majority in U.S. public schools this fall. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2014/08/21/for-first-time-minority-students-expected-to-be-majority-in-u-s-public-schools-this-fall/?utm_term=.96454e52b4a8

- Sullivan, A. L., A'Vant, E. R., Barrett, C. A., Proctor, S. (2017, February). Disproportionality: *A racial justice perspective and practice recommendations.* Symposium conducted at the annual convention of the National Association of School Psychologists, San Antonio, TX.

References

- Ahram, R Fergus, E. Noguera, P. (2011) Addressing racial/ethnic disproportionality in special education: Case studies of suburban school districts, *Teachers College Record* 113(10), 2233–226

- Ayón, Cecilia (2016) Talking to Latino Children About Race, Inequality, and Discrimination: Raising Families in an Anti-Immigrant Political Environment. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*, Vol. 7, No. 3.

- Bates, L.A., & Glick, J.E. (2013). Does it matter if teachers and schools match the student? Racial and ethnic disparities in problem behaviors. *Social Science Research, 42*, 1180-1190

- Burris C.C., Wiley, E., Welner, K., Murphy, J., (2008) Accountability, rigor, and detracking: Achievement effects of embracing a challenging curriculum as a universal good for all students. *Teachers College Record, 110(3)*, 571-607.

- Cikara, M., Bruneau, E.G., & Saxe, R.R. (2011). Us and them: Intergroup failures of empathy. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 20*, 149-153. doi: 10.1177/0963721411408713

- Eberhardt, J.L., Goff, P.A., Purdie, V.J., & Davies, P.G. (2004). Seeing black: Race, crime, and visual processing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 87*, 876–893.

- Garcia, M. E., Frunzi, K., Dean, C. B., Flores, N., & Miller, K. B. (2016). *Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Families and the Community as Partners in Education: Parts 1-4* (REL 2016 – 184, 151, 152, 153). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Pacific. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs.

- Gilliam, W.S., Maupin, A.N., Reyes, C.R., Accavitti, M., Shic, F. (2016). *A research study brief: Do Early Educators' Implicit Biases Regarding Sex and Race Relate to Behavior Expectations and Recommendations of Preschool Expulsions and Suspensions?* Yale University Child Center.

References

- Gregory, A., Skiba, R.J., & Noguera, P.A. (2010). The achievement gap and the discipline gap: Two sides of the same coin? Educational *Researcher, 39(1),* 59–68.

- Jimenez-Castellanos, O. (2010). Relationship between educational resources and school achievement: a mixed method intra-district analysis. *Urban Review, 42(4),* 351-371.

- Lowenhaupt, Rebecca (2016) Immigrant Acculturation in Suburban Schools Serving the New Latino Diaspora, Peabody. *Journal of Education, 91:3*, 348-365.

- Martinez, P. and Wizer-Vecchi, J. (2016) *Fostering Family Engagement through Shared Leadership in the District, Schools, and Community*. VUE, 44: 6-13.

- Murray, C., Murray, K.M., & Waas, G.A. (2008). Child and teacher reports of teacher-student relationships: Concordance of perspectives and associations with school adjustment in urban kindergarten classrooms*. Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 29, 49-61

- Nunn, L. M. (2011). Classrooms as racialized spaces: dynamics of collaboration, tension, and student attitudes in urban and suburban high schools. *Urban Education*, 46(6), 1226-1255.

- Social Work Policy Institute (2014). *Achieving Racial Equity: Calling the Social Work Profession to Action*. Washington, DC: National Association of Social Workers.

- Southern Poverty Law Center (2016). After Election Day: The Trump Effect, The Impact of the 2016 Presidential Election on our Nations Schools. Montgomery, AL: author.
  - https://www.splcenter.org/20161128/trump-effect-impact-2016-presidential-election-our-nations-schools

References

- Southern Poverty Law Center (2016). *10 Day After: Harassment and Intimidation in the Aftermath of the Election*. Montgomery, AL: author.
  - https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/com_hate_incidents_report_final.pdf

- Subramaniam, L. (2011) *Barriers to and facilitators of Latino parent involvement: One Georgia district's perspective*. Electronic Theses & Dissertations. Paper 390.

- Todd, A.R., Thiem, K.C., & Neel, R. (2016). Does seeing faces of young black boys facilitate the identification of threatening stimuli? *Psychological Science, 27*, 384-393. doi:10.1177/0956797615624492

- Tomes, Y.I (2013). *Cross-cultural interactions and understanding.* Poughkeepsie, NY: NOVA.

- Vidal de Hymes, H., & Kilty, K. M. (2007). Latino population growth, characteristics, and settlement trends: implications for social work education in a dynamic political climate. *Journal of Social Work Education, 43(1),* 101-116.

- Walker, S. A., & Pearsall, L. D. (2012). Barriers to advanced placement for Latino students at the high-school level. *Roeper Review, 34(1),* 12-25.

- Weisman and Hansen (2008) Student Teaching in Urban and Suburban Schools: Perspectives of Latino Preservice Teachers. *Urban Education November 2008* 43: 653-670.

- Wildman, S. M., & Davis, A. D. (1995). Language and silence: Making systems of privilege visible. *Santa Clara Law Review, 35*(3), 881–906. Retrieved from: http://digitalcommons.law.scu.edu/lawreview/vol35/iss3/4/